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General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

First Committee
1st meeting
Thursday, 13 September 2001, 3 p.m.
New York

Temporary Chairman: Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea, President of the General Assembly)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Election of the Chairman of the First Committee

The Temporary Chairman: Rule 103 of the rules of procedure, as amended by Assembly resolution 52/163 of 15 December 1997, provides that each Main Committee shall elect a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. These officers shall be elected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, experience and personal competence. The elections shall be held by secret ballot unless the Committee decides otherwise in an election where only one candidate is standing. The nomination of each candidate shall be limited to one speaker, after which the Committee shall immediately proceed to the election.

Furthermore, rule 110 of the rules of procedure provides that congratulations to the officers of a Main Committee shall not be expressed except by the Chairman of the previous session — or, in his absence, by a member of his delegation — after all the officers of the Committee have been elected.

This meeting has been convened for the election of the Chairman of the First Committee. Are there any nominations?

Mr. Than (Myanmar): May I begin by offering our heartfelt sympathy and deepest condolences to the delegation of the United States for the national tragedy — the extensive loss of life and the devastation caused by the terrorist attacks against the Pentagon in Washington and the World Trade Center in New York on 11 September. At this solemn moment of tragedy, our hearts and minds are with the innocent victims and their bereaved families. We are overwhelmed by psychological shock and moral revulsion and by the magnitude of the tragedy and catastrophe caused by these dastardly and evil acts of terrorism.

Turning to the matter under consideration, I should like to take this opportunity to extend my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your unanimous election as the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. I am very delighted to see the Minister for Foreign Affairs of a friendly Asian country, the Republic of Korea, presiding over the Assembly. I wish you every success, Sir, in discharging your onerous responsibilities as the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

I would also like to pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Harri Holkeri of Finland, for his outstanding performance and invaluable contribution during his tenure as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

I have the honour and pleasure of nominating His Excellency Mr. André Erdös of Hungary for election to the chairmanship of the First Committee of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. Ambassador André Erdös is eminently qualified to hold the chairmanship of the First Committee. Ambassador André Erdös has been associated with disarmament for a long time. He

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has a wealth of expertise and experience in the field of arms control and disarmament. Ambassador André Erdös has a long, distinguished diplomatic career, and has served in the Hungarian foreign service in various capacities.

He served as the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations in New York from 1990 to 1994 and again from 1997 to date. He took an active part in the meetings of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Moreover, he served as the Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in 1994. He was a member of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters from 1995 to 1999. He was the Vice-President of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the NPT Review Conference in 2000. The candidature of Ambassador André Erdös for the chairmanship of the First Committee has been endorsed by the Group of Eastern European countries.

Accordingly, I hope that the candidature of Ambassador André Erdös will receive the unanimous approval of this Assembly.

The Temporary Chairman: Mr. André Erdös of Hungary has been nominated by the representative of Myanmar. Since only one candidate has been nominated, I propose that under rule 103 the Committee decide not to hold a secret ballot.

It was so decided.

The Temporary Chairman: I therefore declare His Excellency Mr. André Erdös of Hungary elected Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

The meeting rose at 3.15 p.m.